United Nations A/C.1/50/PV.3

General Assembly
Fiftieth Session

Official Records

First Committee
3rd Meeting
Monday, 16 October 1995, 10 a.m.
New York

Chairman: Mr. Erdenechuluun ..... (Mongolia)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Statement by the Chairman

The Chairman: This morning, in accordance with its programme of work and timetable, the Committee will begin its general debate on all disarmament and international security agenda items. Permit me first, however, to say a few words as presiding officer of the First Committee.

The United Nations came into being half a century ago in the wake of the most devastating war in the history of humankind. The establishment of the world Organization coincided with the unleashing of the power of the atom, which revealed a new vista of seemingly unlimited potential for human betterment but at the same time provided a tool for developing the most destructive weapons ever known to humankind. The atomic explosions over Hiroshima and Nagasaki 50 years ago are a stark reminder of the danger which these weapons pose to world civilization and a constant stimulus to the strengthening of our resolve to abolish these horrendous means of destruction.

Surely it is more than mere symbolism that the very first resolution adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations at its first session, on 24 January 1946, was devoted to limiting the use of atomic energy to peaceful purposes, and to eliminating from national arsenals atomic weapons and all other major weapons adaptable to mass destruction. Even at that early hour, the representatives gathered there sensed that a new approach to security was needed in order to survive in this new age. I would venture to say that, in an as-yet-unformed consciousness, humanity sensed the urgent need for fundamental change.

But this nascent yearning for change was swept aside by the mutual distrust and suspicion of the cold war. The arms race which fed the cold war precluded serious consideration of new security concepts, despite the tremendous efforts exerted by the United Nations and, indeed, by the entire international community.

Nevertheless, one cannot fail to recognize the significance of steps taken on a bilateral and multilateral basis even during the years of the cold-war era. The realization of the potential dangers of the proliferation of nuclear weapons, of their harmful short- and long-term effects on the environment, as well as the attainment of strategic equivalence between the two super-Powers made it possible to reach agreements which have helped to avert some of the most extravagant excesses of the arms race.

The United Nations has been instrumental in taking steps towards achieving fundamental objectives. At a time when over one hundred atmospheric tests were being conducted each year, the partial test-ban Treaty of 1963 provided a dose of environmental sanity. When the spectre of the "nth" nuclear-weapon State loomed on the horizon, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) of 1968 provided an alternative. As science opened up the possibility of new, more terrifying species of germ and poison, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (BWC), of 1972, and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, of 1993, closed the doors to these horrors.

95-86328 (E)

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The United Nations also stimulated and supported the innovative creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones — in 1967, the Treaty of Tlatelolco for Latin America and the Caribbean; in 1986, the Treaty of Rarotonga for the South Pacific; and the forthcoming treaty for Africa.

All these efforts and achievements were promoted by holding three special sessions of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the most important being the first, held in 1978, which adopted a Final Document containing a Declaration of Principles and a Programme of Action leading to the goal of general and complete disarmament, as well as the machinery to implement them. Thus, the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament is regarded by many as a charter for disarmament that also has validity to this day.

The end of the cold war has freed the world from the strains of ideological confrontation, opening up fresh avenues for the adoption of far-reaching measures aimed at eliminating nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction.

Indeed, the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations has of late been highlighted by a number of positive developments in the field of disarmament. The indefinite extension of the NPT; the successful outcome of the Special Conference on the Biological Weapons Convention; the Review Conference of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, which has just concluded; and the accelerated pace of negotiations on a truly comprehensive test-ban treaty are but a few examples of the impressive progress being made.

The really burning question is, "Can this progress be sustained?" Unfortunately, the mere asking of the question by non-nuclear-weapon States smacks of ingratitude to the nuclear-weapon States. It seems to cast doubt on their good faith at the very moment when they are most amply demonstrating it. Unfortunately again, the expectation on the part of the nuclear-weapon States that the non-nuclear-weapon States should trust explicitly in their future behaviour is what makes the non-nuclear-weapon States uneasy. The non-nuclear-weapon States find it hard to believe that five decades of reliance upon nuclear weaponry cannot but have a retarding effect.

These emotions and more were felt as a powerful undercurrent at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). It is a testimony to the skill and dedication of the many hundred delegates that those waters were safely navigated. For all its ups and downs, the NPT Conference adopted decisions which will undoubtedly have a significant and lasting impact on the entire disarmament process.

It is to be hoped that the interlinked decisions on the principles and objectives for non-proliferation and disarmament, on the strengthening of the process for review of the Treaty and on the indefinite extension will constitute a proper basis for the future effective and comprehensive implementation of all the provisions of the NPT. Furthermore, it may be said with a sufficient degree of confidence that a foundation has been laid for the strengthening of the worldwide network of non-proliferation regimes, be it weapons of mass destruction or conventional weapons. As a result, I believe the existing non-proliferation regimes and the setting up of new ones deserve the most careful and innovative approach by the First Committee in its deliberations.

On the other hand, the undercurrents continued to churn. Each nuclear explosion since the NPT Conference has only stirred them more. This session, I am afraid, will not be immune to sharp debate on this matter. I only ask that the debate always be moderated by a sincere desire to find our way to that common ground that gives us a mooring against the dangerous undertow. Even at the risk of redundancy, let us be unequivocal in our praise of agreements well met and the need for more of the same in the years to come. Let neither complacency nor cynicism jeopardize the promise of more progress or cloud the vision of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

In this spirit, this session of the General Assembly can be intensive and, I hope, fulfilling, for we have to address ourselves to the most pressing issues of disarmament in a fundamentally new security environment. But let us have no illusions: we are not the first gathering since the end of the cold war. The conceptual changes that ought to have accompanied the founding of the United Nations are still not fully formed and have not yet taken root, despite the new possibilities. If in our deliberation here we can nurture the emergence and acceptance of just a few innovations in disarmament and international security, we should take some satisfaction in our efforts. Other sessions and other forums will benefit from our labours, and let us hope to develop them further.

The intensive work of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Conference on Disarmament on a nuclear-test ban, substantial contributions to the elaboration of the rolling text made by States participating in those negotiations, the recent statement by President Clinton that the United States

would indefinitely stop all testing and work at the Conference on Disarmament towards the speediest conclusion of the comprehensive test-ban treaty with a zero-yield ban and relevant statements by President Yeltsin, as well as by France and the United Kingdom, create the necessary preconditions for the successful outcome of the negotiations on this issue. It is imperative that 1995, the date to which all nuclear-weapon Powers have committed themselves, will witness the actual conclusion of the treaty. Needless to say, the observers of moratoriums on testing by all nuclear-weapon States would give a positive impetus to those negotiations and be most welcomed by the international community. Actions to the contrary, however, will seriously undermine the confidence placed in the nuclear-weapon States, which have recently undertaken, at the NPT Conference, a commitment to exercise utmost restraint pending the entry into force of the comprehensive test-ban treaty. Consequently, I hope that the Committee will continue to lend its strong support to the activities of the Conference on Disarmament on this critical issue.

A cut-off in the production of fissionable material for weapons was the second measure of nuclear disarmament mentioned in the decision on Principles and Objectives at the NPT Review and Extension Conference. With the decision of President Clinton and President Yeltsin completely to close down weapon-grade-uranium production facilities and drastically to cut down plutonium-reprocessing operations, the problem of cut-off has acquired a new perspective. Unfortunately, the Conference on Disarmament was unable to make progress on this issue. It will therefore command closer attention at this session of the General Assembly as the need to conclude a treaty on this subject has become even more urgent in recent years following disturbing reports of incidents involving the alleged international smuggling of fissile materials.

The third issue of nuclear disarmament mentioned in the decision on Principles and Objectives is the determined pursuit by the nuclear-weapon States of systematic and progressive efforts to reduce nuclear weapons globally with the ultimate goal of their elimination. Despite some efforts on this item in both the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament, we still do not have a clear picture of when reduction of forces will incorporate all five nuclear Powers or how those efforts will become systematized.

The issue of security assurances has clearly moved to the forefront of disarmament dialogue, especially in conjunction with the NPT Review and Extension Conference. An important step forward has been made with the decision of the Conference to the effect that

> "further steps should be considered to assure non nuclear-weapon States party to the Treaty against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. These steps could take the form of an internationally legally binding instrument." *(NPT/CONF.1995/L.5, para. 8)*

The First Committee may wish to consider giving further impetus to that statement.

In addition to the NPT, the comprehensive test-ban treaty and other measures of nuclear disarmament and security assurances, the problem of the creation of additional nuclear-weapon-free zones, which has received further momentum with the final text of a treaty on an African nuclear-weapon-free zone, is emerging as one of the key elements in the mathematics of the security equation.

No less important to our Committee's work are the items concerning the elimination of other weapons of mass destruction. As part of ongoing efforts to strengthen the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, the Ad Hoc Group of Governmental Experts has been actively exploring ways to strengthen compliance with the Convention and develop an effective verification mechanism. That work is to be commended. At the same time, the members parties to the Convention are urged to encourage the Ad Hoc Group to meet its goals prior to the fourth Review Conference on bacteriological weapons, which is to take place some time in 1996.

Not so long ago the international community rejoiced at the successful outcome of long and tedious negotiations on banning chemical weapons. The signing of the Convention in this regard in January 1993 undoubtedly became one of the most important and significant events on the disarmament landscape. Some 37 countries have already ratified the Convention, and let me express my sincere hope that many more will do so in the near future so that it can enter into force at an early date. It would, of course, be most appropriate if those States that are intending to declare stockpiles of chemical weapons were to be among the 65 bringing the Convention into force.

Over the past few years certain aspects of conventional disarmament have been under active scrutiny in the First Committee. A main focus was on international arms

transfers, with special emphasis on illicit trafficking in arms. In this connection the work done by the Disarmament Commission, during its 1995 session, on the issue of arms transfers is to be commended. I believe that the progress, made especially in regard to the scope and structure of the document, lays a sound basis for the successful conclusion of the work next year.

Another issue that is attracting increasing attention is that of the proliferation and excessive accumulation of small arms in many countries. It is of significance that steps are being taken to study ways and means of curbing the illicit circulation of small arms and ensuring their collection and reduction in number.

Despite the fact that the Group of Governmental Experts was unable to agree on the expansion of the United Nations Register and despite the slow progress made in the Conference on Disarmament, renewed efforts on this issue are urgently called for at all levels, including that of the First Committee.

An increasingly indiscriminate use of land-mines, in particular anti-personnel land-mines, has prompted action at the multilateral, regional and unilateral levels. Although it is regrettable that the Review Conference on certain conventional weapons, just concluded in Vienna, was unable to reach agreement on all aspects of this urgent issue, nevertheless, given the complexity and importance of the subject-matter, the States parties to the Convention have decided to continue their work next year with a view to resolving the outstanding issues. In addition, we note with great satisfaction that a very important breakthrough was achieved with the adoption of an additional Protocol to the Convention, namely, Protocol IV on blinding laser weapons.

The traditional disarmament menu of the past decade — compliance, verification, science and technology, the prevention of an arms race in outer space and other items — will undergo little, if any, change. But it is safe to assume that these issues stand to benefit from the overall positive trends and from the attention given to them here.

Within the ambit of disarmament issues I wish to touch briefly on the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Regional Centres dealing with peace and disarmament in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and in Latin America and the Caribbean (A/50/380). It is distressing to note that at a time when unparalleled opportunities are unfolding, the regional centres, as emphasized in the report,

> "remain unable to function in the manner intended by the General Assembly because of inadequate financial resources". *(A/50/380, para. 5)*

It is my earnest hope that delegations, especially those of the regions concerned, will give serious consideration to that matter, so that appropriate action could be taken by the Committee at this session.

The Committee will also be considering three agenda items related to international security: "Review of the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security"; "Strengthening of security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region"; and "Maintenance of international security". In this context, I should like to state that, in the past, the results of the Committee's deliberations have been, for many reasons, rather modest and usually of a general nature. The time was not ripe for applying a businesslike approach to the questions of international security.

The political atmosphere, however, has changed, and the proceedings of the present session of the General Assembly prove that the international community has already taken a more realistic approach in this regard. A growing interest in introducing appropriate confidence- and security-building measures in various regions is moving the world gradually towards greater openness and transparency.

It has been generally recognized that the United Nations should enhance its effectiveness in fulfilling its main responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. There is also a prevailing conviction that a mechanism should be developed to allow the United Nations and its Security Council to prevent and discourage aggression, effectively control the build-up of arms, and deal with humanitarian and ecological problems spawned by armed conflicts.

During the debate in the General Assembly, a great number of proposals were put forward concerning a new concept of international security and the ways and means of making the United Nations stronger, more effective and more relevant to the challenges that the international community is confronted with. It is my belief that the First Committee has the necessary potential to consider all the proposals in a spirit of cooperation and with the willingness to make the best use of them for the benefit of the international community and of the United Nations.

I was delighted to learn that the 1995 Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to Professor Joseph Rotblat and the

Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs, which Professor Rotblat founded and of which he is the President. The Pugwash Conferences, a non-governmental organization that has consultative status with the United Nations, was founded, *inter alia*, to promote the ideas of the Russell-Einstein Manifesto. That Manifesto was issued in London on 9 July 1955 by Bertrand Russell and Albert Einstein and signed by 11 international scientists from East and West, of which Professor Rotblat is the sole survivor. The aims of the Manifesto and the Pugwash Movement are the elimination of the nuclear threat and the abolition of war. For 40 years the Pugwash Movement of scientists has been dedicated to disarmament and international security. As Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali and all his predecessors since U Thant have noted, the aims of the Pugwash Movement are similar to those of the United Nations.

In this connection, I should like to commend very highly the increasing contribution of non-governmental organizations in recent years to the work of the United Nations. These organizations, with sincerity and dedication and with a sense of morality and justice, play an indispensable role in drawing our attention to acute issues that deserve timely consideration and resolute action. I wish to thank them for their active interest in our work and to encourage them to expand their efforts in the field of disarmament and international security.

May I take a moment to mention the presence here with us of a group of young diplomats from 30 countries from all the regions of the world, who are participating in the annual disarmament fellowship programme. Their exposure to our proceedings will be valuable, especially at this crucial time when the world is experiencing great political, economic, social and environmental challenges. We wish them a stimulating and productive stay in New York.

Although there is a sense of urgency to find solutions to the multiplicity of outstanding issues, the path will be difficult for the First Committee. It will take hard work and, most of all, a great deal of mutual trust and cooperation between us in order to achieve steady progress in this work. With the support and active cooperation of Committee members, I am certain that the First Committee of the General Assembly, at this historic fiftieth session, will be able to further contribute substantially towards attaining our common objective — a world free of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction and with a greatly reduced level of conventional weapons and of violence in general.

Statement by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs

The Chairman: I now have the pleasure and honour to welcome Mr. Marrack Goulding, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, to the First Committee, and I call on him.

Mr. Goulding (Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs): Let me begin by congratulating you, Sir, on your election to preside over this very significant session of the First Committee. It is a session that is significant, not only because it comes at a time of great potential in the field of arms control and disarmament, but also because it coincides with the fiftieth anniversary of this Organization. Your diplomatic skills and long experience in the field of disarmament and international security guarantee you success in guiding the Committee's work to fruitful results. Let me also thank you for the honour of inviting me to address the Committee immediately after the very thoughtful and important statement which you have just made, though I have to confess that I cannot help wondering how much you have left for lesser orators to say.

The events of the last 12 months have confirmed yet again that disarmament cannot be pursued in isolation from broader concerns of international security and that these broader concerns are themselves inextricably linked to economic and social issues. Another trend that has been confirmed is that internal conflicts are becoming the norm and inter-State conflicts are becoming comparatively rare.

These trends have had two effects on the Secretary-General's approach to his responsibilities in the field of peace and security. First, he is more and more convinced that you cannot tackle the issues of conflict without tackling the issues of economic and social development, or vice versa. Secondly, he thinks that more attention should be given to efforts to control the weapon systems which are actually killing people — and killing people in tens of thousands — in internal conflicts. Of course, the international community must continue to strive for further progress in preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, but it also needs to work harder to prevent proliferation in the conventional field.

The last year has also confirmed that, generally speaking, the greatest beneficiaries of the improved state of international relations in the post-cold war era are the more developed parts of the world. A glaring exception to this statement is to be found in the appalling conflicts in the

former Yugoslavia, but, as the Secretary-General has repeatedly stated, these are distorting the Organization's efforts in the field of peace and security, at the expense especially of Africa and the republics of the former Soviet Union, where so many internal conflicts call for the attention of the United Nations. The savagery of these conflicts underlines the fact that progress in tackling the problems created by weapons of mass destruction has not been matched by progress in controlling conventional weapons, including light weapons which contribute so perniciously to the destabilization of States and the destruction of the very fabric of their societies. This is why the Secretary-General attaches so much importance to what he calls "microdisarmament".

The Secretary-General also, of course, continues to attach the highest importance to the nuclear field. He shares the view of those who have been heartened by the decisions of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and, with them, he believes that those decisions have laid the foundation for pursuing more effectively the ultimate objective of eliminating nuclear weapons. Recent events have strengthened his view that the commitment of the nuclear-weapon States to agree on a comprehensive test-ban treaty, with no exceptions, must be honoured as early as possible in 1996. Equally important will be negotiations on a cut-off treaty. These two agreements will open the way to negotiations on further quantitative reductions in nuclear weapons. The Secretary-General is also following closely the issue of nuclear safety and nuclear smuggling, while recognizing that the latter problem has in part resulted from otherwise desirable reductions in nuclear arsenals.

A very welcome achievement in the nuclear field this year has been the conclusion of the Treaty on the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone. The Secretary-General urges the African States and the nuclear-weapon States to ensure that this long-awaited Treaty enters into force without delay.

There is thus reason to hope that by the end of 1996 most of the main issues which are currently on the nuclear disarmament agenda either will have been resolved or will be well on the way to resolution. In these circumstances, the time may have come for Member States, and the members of the Conference on Disarmament in particular, to consider what other nuclear disarmament issues could usefully be added to the agenda.

As regards other weapons of mass destruction, the Secretary-General, in his capacity as depositary of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC) has written twice this year to all Governments which have not yet ratified the Convention, urging them to do so and thus make it possible for it to enter promptly into force. I regret to have to report to the First Committee that the response to the Secretary-General's letters has been disappointing: we are still 25 short of the necessary 65 ratifications. As for the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, the States parties have been working to correct a recognized shortcoming in it, namely, the absence of measures to verify compliance. It is important that this work should be brought quickly to a successful conclusion.

While the picture in the field of weapons of mass destruction is thus not unpromising, progress in the field of conventional weapons has been less impressive. This is partly due, perhaps, to the current impasse in reaching agreement on which forum should deal with issues relating to this category of weapons. Apart from the Review Conference of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, just concluded in Vienna, there are very few conventional issues which are currently under active negotiation.

The Review Conference of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons produced only partial results. Much remains to be done. It is especially disappointing that so little progress was made on anti-personnel land-mines, notwithstanding the rapidly growing conviction worldwide that the suffering inflicted by these weapons on so many innocent civilians is simply not justified by any military value the weapons may have.

Another consequence of the post-cold-war change in the nature of conflict is recognition that greater attention needs to be given to regional approaches to disarmament. This does not mean abandoning global approaches or ignoring global threats to international security. We need to find the time and energy to deal resolutely with both sets of issues.

It is thus very regrettable — as you, Mr. Chairman, observed — that, at precisely this time when the importance of regional approaches is increasingly recognized, lack of financial support seems likely to force the closure of the three Regional Centres. In his report to the General Assembly, the Secretary-General has made it brutally clear that, unless Member States provide the necessary funding

on a voluntary basis, we shall have to abandon the vision of conducting our regional efforts from regional bases. The three Centres will have to be closed with the result that the regional activities of the Centre for Disarmament Affairs will have to be carried out only from Headquarters and not in the regions concerned.

I return now to "micro-disarmament". By this the Secretary-General means a set of measures to deal with specific, pragmatic and achievable goals in the area of conventional weapons. An example is the advisory mission to the sub-Saharan region of Africa — or, I should say, the Sahelian region of Africa — despatched at the request of the States concerned. That mission confirmed the magnitude of the problem of illicit trafficking in small weapons in that area but the mission also produced valuable insights and proposals on how this problem could be tackled by the Governments concerned, with effective support from the international community. The Secretary-General, with the agreement of those Governments, is now seeking the involvement of the United Nations agencies that can contribute the necessary expertise and resources to this effort. He hopes that the agencies concerned, and the Governments which contribute voluntarily to their budgets, will share his perception of the inescapable link between security and development.

The Secretary-General also attaches the highest importance to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, a global undertaking which has shown quite positive initial results. He believes that the Register could become even more effective in building confidence and facilitating efforts to control the weapons systems concerned if it were also developed in regional and subregional contexts.

These are some examples of specific and concrete measures that, in the Secretary-General's judgement, could help to tackle the problems of excessive and uncontrolled conventional armaments in regions of the world which are especially vulnerable to conflict at the present time. He will continue to seek the support of Member States for such measures in the context of the mandate entrusted to him by the General Assembly in the field of disarmament and international security.

Finally, I turn to housekeeping matters. The Secretariat has been re-examining its ability to provide Member States with the support they need to take advantage of the new momentum in the field of disarmament. The Secretariat's principal instrument in this area is, of course, the Centre for Disarmament Affairs. The Centre is now fully integrated into the Department of Political Affairs and can thus contribute its own special expertise to the Secretary-General's preventive and peacemaking efforts in the broader context of international peace and security.

One of the most important functions of the Centre for Disarmament Affairs is the substantive servicing of United Nations disarmament negotiations and deliberative bodies. This function will continue to be given the highest priority. At the same time, we have come to the conclusion that certain other activities have largely fulfilled their objectives. Examples are the provision of forums for exchanging views on disarmament issues or the holding of conferences and the publication of documents to promote the disarmament concept. Even when funded by voluntary contributions from Member States, these activities consume a considerable amount of staff time. At this time of great financial stringency, when the Centre's staff in New York is hard pressed to handle its high-priority substantive activities, such as the Register of Conventional Arms and its servicing duties, these promotional activities will have to be given lower priority.

The Secretary-General attaches particular importance to the negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on issues such as the comprehensive test-ban treaty and soon, we hope, a cut-off treaty. Given the Conference's growing work load, I have decided to strengthen and reorganize the Geneva branch of the Centre for Disarmament Affairs so as to enable it to provide a higher quality of service and expertise to Member States in their work there. The strengthened Geneva branch will be able to service more special meetings and review conferences that take place in Geneva and elsewhere in Europe. This will save money because fewer staff will have to cross the Atlantic from New York to service those meetings.

I am grateful to have had the opportunity of addressing the Committee at the outset of its work. I am confident that it will have a most fruitful session, and I wish the members of the Committee and their delegations all success in the deliberations in the coming weeks. Please be assured of my full support and that of all my colleagues in the Centre for Disarmament Affairs.

Agenda items 57 to 81

General debate on all disarmament and international security agenda items

Mr. de Icaza (Mexico) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Sir, please accept the congratulations of the Mexican delegation on your appointment to serve as Chairman of the

First Committee. Your experience in the field of disarmament augurs well for good results. We were most pleased to hear your statement today, and you can rely on my delegation's cooperation in carrying out your important task.

I am pleased that the Committee has elected Mexico to serve as one of its Vice-Chairmen, and I should like to thank the members of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean countries for their support. We should like to stress once again our peaceful vocation and our dedication to nuclear disarmament.

This year is a particularly important one. The Organization is celebrating its fiftieth anniversary, and half a century has elapsed since nuclear bombs were used. An important conference has been held — the Review and Extension Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Considerable progress has been made towards the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty, the military denuclearization regime in Latin America and the Caribbean has been strengthened, and the continuation or resumption of nuclear testing has mobilized the condemnation of the international community to an unprecedented extent.

The Review and Extension Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons was faced with the dilemma of deciding whether the Treaty should remain in effect indefinitely, thereby providing the nuclear Powers with an assurance that such weapons would not be disseminated and thereby making it possible and reasonable to proceed to their eventual elimination or, on the other hand, whether it would be better for there to be regular extensions so as to preserve an element of pressure for the speeding up of nuclear disarmament. Both options were focused on the same final goal, namely, to free mankind from the threat posed by the very existence of nuclear weapons.

It says a lot about our era of *détente* and uncertainty that the argument for stability and security was chosen without sacrificing the means of exerting pressure. It was decided, without a vote, to extend the Treaty indefinitely and, at the same time, to adopt a Declaration of Principles and Objectives and to set up retooled machinery for the periodic review of compliance with the obligations entered into. The three decisions are closely interlinked.

In the Declaration of Principles and Objectives, the nuclear-weapon States reaffirmed their commitment to pursue in good faith negotiations on effective measures relating to nuclear disarmament and to make systematic and progressive efforts to reduce nuclear weapons with the ultimate goal of eliminating those weapons.

In the periodic review conferences, compliance with the commitments contained in the preamble and provisions of the Treaty is to be assessed, as is compliance with the agreed Principles and Objectives. Obviously, if it is determined that there has been unsatisfactory compliance, or even no compliance, the Treaty will not have achieved the necessary universality and some States may consider withdrawing from it, as provided for in the Treaty itself.

The decision to extend the Treaty indefinitely does not perpetuate a world divided between non-nuclear-weapon States, the vast majority, and the few, very few, nuclear-weapon States. That asymmetry need not be viewed as eternal but, rather, as an incentive to achieve true non-proliferation — universal, geographical, qualitative and quantitative. The non-proliferation of nuclear weapons has meaning only if there is a commitment to, and progress towards, their total elimination. The coming years will tell us whether the decisions adopted were indeed the right ones. The answer will depend upon the nuclear-weapon States.

Progress has been made in the negotiations on the comprehensive test-ban treaty, and today we can foresee their conclusion in the near future. Examination of the legal and institutional provisions of the rolling text, which has been annexed to the report of the Conference on Disarmament, provides us with a fairly comprehensive idea of what is involved. The progress in defining areas of application has been less than had been hoped, despite the position taken by the nuclear-weapon States, which have expressed their readiness to expand the scope of the treaty to include all tests — the so-called "zero option". We hope that in the near future that article can be drafted, for without it, it will be very difficult to make progress in other areas of the treaty, particularly with regard to verification.

Mexico has stated on various occasions that the Treaty must prohibit — completely and for ever — all nuclear tests, by any State and in any environment, and that there can be no reason or justification — even related to the safety or reliability of nuclear weapons — for such tests.

In the area of verification, tangible progress has been made with respect to the composition of the international monitoring system. None the less, some aspects remain to be resolved in the political decision-making area, such as

responsibility for analysing the data that would provide the basis for determining whether a violation has taken place. The financing of the system must be as transparent as possible, and it must be ensured that the less wealthy States do not bear a burden disproportionate to their economic capacities.

The verification of an ambiguous phenomenon by means of *in situ* inspections is one of the most complicated issues to be resolved, which is understandable in view of the invasive nature of this type of inspection. How to conduct such an inspection, what kind of vote would be required to carry it out and whether prior consultations should be held are some of the difficult topics that remain outstanding. My delegation, for its part, would prefer a simple mechanism that would not lend itself to abuse but that would none the less make it possible automatically to use *in situ* inspections to clarify a situation.

We are very close to achieving one of the principal goals we have been working towards in the area of disarmament since the very beginning of the work of the United Nations. The conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty has been a consistent request of the international community in many different forums, and has pivotal importance in halting the nuclear-arms race. Together with Australia and New Zealand, Mexico has, since 1993, been submitting a joint resolution in this regard and it has been adopted unanimously. This year we will continue our work with renewed energy, and we trust that negotiations on the treaty will be concluded in time for it to be opened for signature before the next session of the General Assembly.

The declaration of Principles and Objectives reaffirms that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones enhances global and regional peace and security. In this context, it is a particular pleasure for me to emphasize that this year, the Treaty of Tlatelolco has been signed by the 33 States that make up our regional group; 32 have ratified it, and, of those, only 2 have not yet made the statement of dispensation from entry into force. In accordance with Treaty law, any State that has signed a legally binding instrument is obliged to refrain from committing any acts in violation of the aim and purpose of the Treaty. In this respect, we can affirm, and congratulate ourselves, that the Treaty of Tlatelolco has fulfilled its purpose of eradicating from its zone of application the threat of nuclear weapons.

The five nuclear-weapon Powers, in a legally binding instrument, have provided negative security assurances to the States Parties to the Treaty of Tlatelolco. These same assurances should be granted to other nuclear-weapon-free zones and to non-nuclear-weapon States that are parties to the NPT.

In the meantime, we must promote the establishment of new nuclear-weapon-free zones, in addition to the ones in the South Pacific and Africa, as an important means of nuclear disarmament. We should recall that the Review and Extension Conference on the NPT supported the establishment in the Middle East of a nuclear-weapon-free zone and of a zone free of other weapons of mass destruction. In addition, there is a long list of areas whose members have expressed support for, and worked towards, the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones and zones of peace — free from weapons of mass destruction.

During the past five years we have been hearing repeated expressions of satisfaction at the end of the cold war. This fact, which has given rise to so many expectations in the area of disarmament and international security, has none the less not given negotiations on disarmament the impetus that we had hoped for. In addition, far from leading to the elimination of obsolete doctrines based on the principle of deterrence, it has led to the consideration of new concepts such as "limited deterrence" or "joint deterrence".

Despite the commitment entered into at the NPT Conference to "exercise utmost restraint" in the area of nuclear testing, pending the entry into force of the Treaty prohibiting them, these tests have continued, with all the dangers that they entail for the environment. International public opinion was perplexed to hear that, during this era of *détente*, tests are necessary to guarantee security and sovereignty, or to ensure the reliability of the weapons, or to improve simulation techniques that would make the tests unnecessary.

These arguments demonstrate that the nuclear-arms race is continuing, they fuel suspicions between nuclear Powers and they reinforce the resistance of States that are on the verge of definitively renouncing nuclear weapons, since all of them legitimately aspire to safeguarding their sovereignty and security. One thing is for certain: they do not encourage negotiations on disarmament.

There are no proven truths, but there are obvious absurdities, as a Levantine poet said long ago. Our planet is a limited entity, and in the past 50 years 2,044 nuclear tests have been carried out — an average of approximately one every nine days. It is clearly absurd to say that this incessant bombardment, this constant shaking up of the innards of the planet has, has had and will have no effect

on the environment or on this Earth, which belongs to all of us and to our descendants.

Mexico, together with the Member States of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, the States Parties to the Treaty of Rarotonga and many other countries, will work in support of the adoption by the General Assembly of an immediate moratorium on nuclear tests.

Mr. Martínez Morcillo (Spain) (*interpretation from Spanish*): On behalf of the European Union, may I congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the First Committee. We are sure that under your presidency the work of the First Committee will be carried through successfully.

I should like also to extend my congratulations to the other members of the Bureau. The European Union wishes to assure the Committee of its unreserved support in the discharge of the important responsibilities that lie ahead of it. The associated countries — Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania and the Slovak Republic — concur in this statement.

The fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations affords us an ideal opportunity to recall the principles and purposes laid down in the Charter of the United Nations, as well as the United Nations key contributions deriving from those purposes and principles, namely in the codification of international law, in the maintenance of international peace and security in cooperation with regional organizations, in disarmament, in decolonization, in development and humanitarian aid, in the protection and promotion of human rights, and, in general, in cooperation among nations in a wide variety of fields. Those same purposes and principles will serve as the basis for all of the Organization's future tasks, including those related to international security and disarmament.

Undoubtedly, the new international environment of today has helped us achieve the objectives set forth in the Charter and has paved the way for the signing of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC), the indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the ratification of START I, to name but a few in the disarmament field. However, new regional and internal conflicts have emerged, thereby endangering international peace and security. And so the primary purpose established 50 years ago in the Preamble to the United Nations Charter is fully valid today, and I quote:

> "To maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace ...".

Conflicts such as those prevailing in Central Africa, in the territories of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and in the former Yugoslavia — in the peaceful solution of which the European Union plays an active role — clearly serve to underline the continued relevance of that United Nations purpose and also the need to attain its implementation.

Nevertheless, the virulence of some localized conflicts is a continuous reminder of the existence of global threats that have to be confronted and that represent a potential incentive for the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the excessive accumulation of conventional weapons. That is why any consideration of a system intended to guarantee international peace and security must necessarily include both global and regional perspectives.

In short, the practical achievement of that purpose in the present international context entails preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, further strengthening existing conventions in this field, pursuing the process of nuclear disarmament, limiting and reducing existing conventional arsenals and establishing confidence- and security-building measures. In order to attain these objectives, verification and transparency will have an important role to play.

The year of the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations has borne witness to an event which, for the European Union, constitutes a fundamental element for security in the next century, namely the indefinite extension of the NPT. The European Union welcomes the decision, which was reached without a vote — an outcome for which the European Union worked actively through its joint action following the meeting of the European Council in Corfu in June 1994. Likewise, the European Union considers that the decision in favour of indefinite extension will facilitate the implementation of our common goals, namely the prevention of the spread of nuclear weapons, the promotion of the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and the determined pursuit by the nuclear-weapon States of systematic and progressive efforts to reduce nuclear weapons globally, with the ultimate goal of eliminating

those weapons, and the pursuit, by all States, of general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.

There are today 180 States parties to the NPT. This implies that only a small minority remains outside the fundamental norms governing nuclear non-proliferation. This is precisely why the European Union urges those States that have not yet done so to adhere to the NPT and to conclude the corresponding safeguards agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency. The European Union wishes to express its satisfaction at the recent accessions to the NPT, which, undoubtedly, will enhance security at both the regional and the global level.

Similarly, the European Union attaches great importance to the other two decisions adopted at the NPT Review Conference, namely the decision to strengthen the review process of the Treaty and the decision on the principles and objectives of non-proliferation and disarmament. By making all States parties more accountable for the effective implementation of the provisions of the Treaty, the enhanced review procedure will serve as a valuable new element in the fight against nuclear proliferation. In this context, as in all activities in the sphere of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, the decision of the Conference on principles and objectives will henceforth constitute an essential frame of reference.

In this context, the agreed objective to conclude a comprehensive test-ban treaty (CTBT), which will have to be universal and internationally and effectively verifiable, no later than 1996, clearly reflects the priority attributed to this question by the international community. The European Union attaches particular importance to the conclusion of a CTBT. It is actively encouraging these negotiations and is fully committed to their successful conclusion within the agreed time-frame. The European Union welcomes the progress made at these negotiations during the last session of the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. It would like especially to highlight the proposal concerning the scope of the future treaty leading to the ban of any nuclear-weapon-test explosion or of any other nuclear explosion. This aims at a true zero-yield option for all nuclear-weapon tests. The European Union recalls that according to the decision on the principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, and pending the entry into force of a comprehensive test-ban treaty, the nuclear-weapon States should exercise the utmost restraint in nuclear tests.

The immediate commencement and early conclusion of a treaty on a ban on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices (the "cut-off treaty") is yet another priority of the European Union in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation. The decision of the Conference on Disarmament to create an ad hoc committee with a mandate to negotiate such a treaty is a matter of satisfaction for the European Union.

The European Union notes with disappointment that it was not possible for any substantive work to be done at this year's session of the Conference on Disarmament, and it has appealed to all States concerned to enable the Ad Hoc Committee to start work promptly at the beginning of the 1996 session on the basis of the Shannon report and the mandate contained therein. We repeat that appeal. The European Union is of the view that a cut-off treaty would put an end to the global production of fissile material for explosive purposes and would thus contribute to reducing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and to nuclear disarmament globally.

Likewise, the European Union welcomes the efforts made by the five nuclear-weapon States in the matter of security assurances in response to the legitimate aspirations of non-nuclear States parties to the NPT. Security Council resolution 984 (1995) adopted by consensus constitutes an important step forward as do the individual national declarations of the nuclear-weapon States concerned. The European Union notes the reference to this question in the decision on Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament which states that:

> "further steps should be considered to assure non-nuclear-weapon States party to the Treaty against the use or the threat of use of nuclear weapons"

and that:

> "these steps could take the form of an internationally legally binding instrument". *(NPT/CONF.1995/32 (Part I), para. 8)*

Undoubtedly, the indefinite extension of the NPT also implies endorsement of other activities aimed at preventing the spread of nuclear weapons. In this context, the European Union invites all States to adopt responsible policies for transfers of their nuclear material, equipment and technology. Such policies would redound to the benefit of peaceful transfers of this type of material.

In this context, the European Union cannot but underline the fundamental role of the IAEA in these areas, and wishes to pledge its unwavering support for the

ongoing process to strengthen the safeguards system through the 93+2 programme so as to ensure early implementation of its provisions. Furthermore, the European Union reiterates the invitation to all States to participate in the IAEA voluntary reporting system on nuclear transfers.

Likewise, the European Union welcomes the significant progress made in reducing nuclear arsenals and invites the nuclear-weapon States to pursue with determination their efforts in this direction. The ratification and entry into force of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START I) constitutes a decisive landmark in this context and leaves the way open for timely ratification of the START II Treaty.

As the Security Council stated at its 3046th meeting, held at the level of Heads of State and Government in January 1992, "The proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction constitutes a threat to international peace and security" *(S/23500, p. 4)*. The European Union is determined to make every effort to strengthen the existing norms against chemical and biological weapons.

The European Union urges all signatories to the Chemical Weapons Convention, including all States members of the European Union that have not yet done so, to ratify the Convention as soon as possible, and will make every endeavour to secure the required 65 ratifications so that it may enter into force in a timely fashion. This prospect will undoubtedly have a positive impact on the efforts of the Preparatory Commission to resolve issues that are still outstanding. The European Union also urges States that have not yet done so to sign the Convention.

The European Union attaches great importance to the reinforcement of instruments for disarmament and non-proliferation in the field of biological weapons. The Union is hopeful that the ad hoc Group created by the Special Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on Biological Weapons will continue its work with efficiency to ensure that the negotiations with a view to strengthening the effectiveness of the Convention will lead to the conclusion of a verification protocol in the near future, preferably by the time of the 1996 Review Conference. In this respect, the results of the meeting of the Group held from 10 to 21 July were encouraging, since they provide a sound basis for further work by this Group, for which meetings have already been scheduled for 1996. The European Union therefore invites all States parties to participate, at the appropriate level of expertise, in those sessions. The European Union appeals to all States that have not done so to participate in the confidence-building measures that already exist by submitting annual data, as agreed at the Third Review Conference of the Parties to the Convention on biological and toxin weapons.

Apart from the obligations to prevent proliferation derived from the existing disarmament agreements, the European Union considers the measures taken on export controls to be useful instruments in the efforts to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, their object being to stem proliferation without detriment to transfers of material, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes in the nuclear, chemical, biological and space-research fields.

That is why we consider that the existing controls in these areas — the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the Australia Group and the Missile Technology Control Regime — do contribute to the attainment of the objectives included in the relevant treaties. These controls are kept under review to ensure that they continue to fulfil their role, which is to complement the existing treaties. The European Union therefore invites all States to adopt responsible policies with regard to transfers of sensitive material and to establish export control systems as a means of preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Not to be forgotten in this context is the commitment assumed by the European Union through a common action and the regulation of dual-use materials and technology. Thanks to these measures, such European Union transfers will be controlled without hampering free trade of such products, and, at the same time, their diversion with proliferation aims in view will be avoided.

There is no doubt that weapons of mass destruction cause worldwide concern. The devastating effects of their use have, unfortunately, been verified in some cases. In this respect, the firm stance of the Security Council, in particular in the case of Iraq, and the importance of the activities of the United Nations Special Commission should be noted. Regarding another case of concern dealt with by the Security Council, the European Union would like to express its full support for all efforts undertaken by international organizations or individual countries that could contribute to an early solution of the nuclear question in North Korea.

At the same time, the entire world has become aware of the terrible effects of the use of conventional weapons. Tens of thousands of casualties around the world bear witness to the cruel effects of the irresponsible and indiscriminate use of anti-personnel land-mines. It is a

matter of great satisfaction for the European Union that Governments and international organizations should have decided to respond to the suffering of the civilian population. Proof of our deep, sustained concern on this issue is the decision by the European Union to take joint action comprising three elements: a contribution to international mine clearance — for example, with a contribution of 3 million ECUs to the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund — a common European Union moratorium on the export of anti-personnel mines, and the active preparation of the Review Conference on the 1980 Convention on Prohibitions and Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, and the strengthening of its Protocol II. In addition, the European Union adopted, on 18 September, a common position with the aim of fostering the adoption of a new protocol on blinding lasers, which satisfies the humanitarian concern to avoid unnecessary suffering without limiting the legitimate military use of lasers.

The European Union takes note of the progress made during the first part of the Review Conference, held in Vienna from 25 September to 13 October, with the adoption of a new Protocol IV on blinding laser weapons, which responds to humanitarian concerns to avoid unnecessary suffering without limiting the legitimate military use of lasers. However, the European Union regrets that the Conference has been unable, at this stage, to agree on a significantly strengthened Protocol II of the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby Traps and Other Devices. Building upon the progress made on this Protocol II during the first part of the Review Conference, and keeping in mind the objectives, it stated, in its joint action of 12 May 1995, that the European Union looks forward to incorporating significant improvements in an amended Protocol II, to be adopted at the resumed Review Conference. In the meantime, the European Union strongly appeals to all participating States to spare no effort to ensure a satisfactory outcome of the Review Conference, which will significantly reduce the dangers posed by the indiscriminate use of land-mines and contribute to the eventual elimination of anti-personnel land-mines, as viable and humane alternatives are developed, as the ultimate goal of efforts in this field.

However, all these measures aimed at strengthening the 1980 Convention will have full effect only if there is a notable increase in the number of parties to the Treaty. The European Union thus calls upon all States that are not yet parties to the Convention to adhere to it. Only through universal adherence to it will it be possible to eliminate the indiscriminate use of these weapons.

Furthermore, in this context, the European Union recognizes the importance of the initiatives taken by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and supported by governmental and non-governmental humanitarian organizations, *inter alia*, the convening of the meeting on mine clearance last July, which has served as an international showcase for this problem. It has also contributed to funds being collected for the Voluntary Trust Fund. The political and financial results of the meeting on mine clearance should have a positive impact on the de-mining programmes and the work related to the Trust Fund, which was set up on the basis of a European Union initiative.

Transparency in armaments constitutes a fundamental instrument for confidence- and stability-building on a global scale, and even more so, if possible, on a regional level. The European Union has consistently supported these measures in the field of weapons of mass destruction through declarations included in the Chemical Weapons Convention or through voluntary declarations, both within the framework of the biological weapons Convention and with reference to the IAEA.

Nevertheless, the member States of the European Union would like to emphasize that transparency measures related to weapons of mass destruction are different from transparency measures related to conventional weapons.

It is indeed in the field of conventional weapons that transparency measures appear to have developed more fully, owing specifically to the establishment of the United Nations Register for Transfers of Conventional Arms. An assessment of the functioning of this mechanism, which was originally proposed by the European Union, has to be positive, although it is to be hoped that the number of countries submitting data will progressively increase. In the opinion of the European Union, this enlargement in the number of participants should be accompanied by an extension of the scope of the Register, that is to say, with the inclusion of information on military holdings and procurement through national production. The data reported by the European Union during the three years of the Register's functioning clearly reflects the Union's commitment in this matter. Therefore, it invites all States to participate, while also encouraging them to submit supplementary data, as is being done by the States of the European Union themselves. The European Union also considers it necessary not only to review the present

functioning of the Register but also to develop it further to ensure that it continues to respond to the needs which led to its creation. Thus, the European Union supports the work of the Secretary-General, in collaboration with the Group of Governmental Experts, to realize a further development of the Register by 1997. In order to promote the functioning of the Register and its further development, the States members of the European Union will submit a draft resolution on this issue.

It is not pure chance that one of the first areas in which the principle of transparency has been applied relates to transfers of conventional weapons. The European Union considers it necessary for all States to adopt responsible policies in matters relating to transfers of conventional weapons. Uncontrolled transfers could constitute destabilizing elements and have a negative effect on region and local points of conflict and tension, to which I have referred earlier in my statement.

Given the importance attached to the issue of transfers of conventional weapons, the European Union welcomes the progress made on this issue during the last session of the Disarmament Commission and is confident that further notable results will be obtained at the next session of the Commission, which is to finalize its study on this question. At the same time, the European Union believes that the Conference on Disarmament must continue to address the issue of transparency in armaments, which could also contribute to a Conference on Disarmament agenda with a better balance between issues relating to conventional weapons and weapons of mass destruction.

As I said earlier, measures to increase confidence and greater transparency in military questions may have greater repercussions in the regional sphere, above all where conventional weapons are concerned. The European Union welcomes the results obtained at the last summit meeting of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), now the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The European Union welcomes the determination manifested in Budapest to strengthen the confidence-building measures included in the Vienna document, as well as the adoption of a code of conduct for political-military aspects of security and the global exchange of military information.

With regard still to the European region, the European Union would like to avail itself of this opportunity to reaffirm its support for the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. The European Union considers the Treaty a basic instrument in guaranteeing and improving military security and stability on the European continent. In spite of some problems, the overall record of compliance with the Treaty has so far been excellent. The European Union strongly hopes that this record will be maintained and confirmed in November, once the present phase of the reduction of weapons and equipment to the levels established in the Treaty is completed.

Similarly, the European Union attributes importance to the Treaty on Open Skies, as a means of encouraging transparency, security and stability from Vancouver to Vladivostock. The timely entry into force of that Treaty is one of the priority objectives of the European Union, and we therefore invite all signatory States which have not yet done so to proceed to its early ratification.

The European Union expresses its satisfaction at the advances made in the field of confidence-building measures and disarmament in other areas of the world. It welcomes the signing of the Treaty of Tlatelolco by Cuba and its ratification by Guyana. The European Union also welcomes progress towards the conclusion of a treaty on an African nuclear-weapon-free zone.

The same applies to the work undertaken in the Forum of the Association of South-East Asian Nations to promote increased security and stability in the Asia-Pacific regional and to establish a denuclearized zone in South-East Asia.

Lastly, we must not fail to mention the project for the creation of a zone free from weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, which is in accordance with the decision adopted at the Extension Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The European Union considers that this issue should be the object of a well-balanced approach within the First Committee.

The European Union would not wish to let pass this opportunity to underline the importance it attaches to the Mediterranean region and to the efforts aimed at strengthening security and cooperation within the region. In this connection, we would like to mention the Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference at Barcelona, which is scheduled for next November. That Conference will foster the process of establishing an area for exchange and dialogue as a means to guarantee peace, stability and the well-being of the peoples of the region.

The European Union welcomes the recent decision by the Conference on Disarmament to adopt the report presented by the Coordinator on this matter at the plenary

meeting of the Conference on 12 August 1993 in response to General Assembly resolution 49/77 B. It calls for the early implementation of that resolution, which it regards as a step towards the admission to membership of all those States that have applied to date. This remains the objective of the European Union.

Lastly, I should like to refer to the organization of the work of the First Committee. It is the considered opinion of the European Union that the work undertaken on this matter at previous sessions should continue during this fiftieth session of the General Assembly. Accordingly, in agreement with paragraph 3 of resolution 49/85 we request you, Mr. Chairman, to continue with consultations for rationalizing the work of the First Committee and increasing its efficiency. The European Union is ready to participate actively in the thematic approach that will take place after this general debate in accordance with the practice begun at the last session. We are convinced that these in-depth consultations will produce the desired results, which, in turn, will assist the United Nations in its purpose of promoting and maintaining international peace and security, a purpose established in its Charter at the time of its founding 50 years ago, a purpose which continues to be valid today.

Mr. Somogyi (Hungary): May I at the very outset extend to you, Mr. Chairman, our congratulations on your election to your important post, one fully justified by your high personal qualities, diplomatic skills and the vast experience you have accumulated in the field of international security and disarmament issues. You may rest assured that my delegation stands ready to assist you in carrying out your responsible task. Our congratulations go to the other officers of the Committee as well.

My delegation fully shares the position that has just been exposed by the representative of Spain, who spoke on behalf of the European Union as well as the associated States, including the Republic of Hungary. This coincidence of views is based on the fact that my country associates itself with the values of the European, Euro-Atlantic community of nations. Consequently, the aspirations of the European Union and of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) are in full harmony with the principles of Hungary's philosophy and policy of security, and the positions represented by those organizations are, in most cases, identical with our concrete political objectives.

Hungary too would like to see the emergence of a new European security architecture, an international security system built on cooperation among States and international organizations and institutions. We are convinced that with the ideological divisions gone, the spirit of cooperation should prevail over confrontation in international relations because it is in the best genuine interests of all nations. Thus, security policies based on national interests must be cooperation-oriented, *per se*.

It is in this spirit that we are convinced that the arms control and disarmament process must remain an integral part of our security-policy agenda. We do believe that arms control continues to be a major pillar of security and stability. Therefore one of the challenges the international community has to face today is to see to it that existing arms-control treaties are fully implemented and their implementation properly verified, that old obligations are adapted to new realities and requirements, and that new agreements, new commitments are elaborated where appropriate.

The First Committee's general debate is taking place at a time especially opportune for taking stock of our accomplishments and challenges and for devising plans for the future. We have arrived at the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations with impressive gains, made during the past few years, in the field of disarmament. Agreements to limit the proliferation of many types of weapons have been achieved at a more promising pace than ever before. Hand in hand with the ongoing transformations in the global political climate, a window of opportunity has opened, enabling us to achieve security at lower levels of armaments. Consequently, we also face an increasing need to reassess our thinking on and our approaches to the whole process of disarmament.

As 1995 draws to a close, it is almost certain that we shall come to the conclusion that it was a year in which the international community became more alert and attentive to the risks of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and showed firm determination to act against those risks.

The indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is perhaps the most telling example of this. My Government has always attached the highest priority to this goal and worked vigorously towards its achievement. We are deeply convinced that by making the NPT a Treaty of indefinite duration the States parties ensured its continued role as the major international legal instrument providing a basic guarantee for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons worldwide.

The indefinitely extended Treaty, together with the strengthened review mechanism, will undoubtedly add a major element of stability to the emerging new international security system. Let me reiterate here that Hungary is committed to the full implementation of the resolutions of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference in all their aspects. There is no doubt that the success of the follow-up will be judged by the progress towards new significant measures relating to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and to disarmament.

The early conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty (CTBT) and the commencement of negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear-weapon purposes are goals that, in our view, should continue to be high on the disarmament agenda.

Hungary welcomes the acceleration of the work accomplished in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva and the increasing support for having a CTBT signed before the end of the fifty-first session of the United Nations General Assembly. This would constitute a clear-cut demonstration of the will and ability of the international community successfully to address yet another aspect of the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction.

We look forward to the resumption of the CTBT negotiations in January 1996, with the beginning of the new session of the Conference on Disarmament. Although we firmly believe that action towards securing this new international legal instrument banning nuclear-test explosions in a verifiable and comprehensive manner is well advanced and irreversible, important political decisions on key treaty elements have yet to be taken in order to meet the deadline set by the NPT Review and Extension Conference.

We should like to say that the decisions of the Governments of the United Kingdom, the United States and France to support a truly comprehensive ban on nuclear testing, including low-yield explosions, and the recent French commitment to sign such a treaty by the autumn of 1996 are positive moves in this direction. This bodes well for the Geneva talks. We are hopeful that between sessions the other nuclear-weapon States will have sufficient time to reflect on these developments and, thus, be enabled to contribute to this trend towards convergence of positions on the scope of a CTBT.

At the same time, we cannot but express our regret about the fact that the unilateral commitments to refrain from conducting nuclear-test explosions are not being maintained by all. Some of the nuclear-weapon States have decided to change their policies in this field. At this juncture, we should like to stress the importance of exercising the utmost restraint with regard to nuclear testing as a factor conducive to the early conclusion of a CTBT.

With regard to another aspect of the current agenda for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, my Government attaches great importance to prohibiting the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other explosive devices. As one of the major items in the programme of action adopted by the NPT Review and Extension Conference, this should be the subject of urgent negotiation. It is most unfortunate that, in spite of the encouraging consensus decisions on the subject earlier this year in the Conference on Disarmament, we are witnessing a further delay in commencement of the work.

Hungary believes that a universal, non-discriminatory and effectively verifiable cut-off treaty is realistically achievable in a relatively short period. It would cap the amount of weapon-grade material, and the verification measures would extend international safeguards to new facilities. We add our voice to the voices of those who urge the Conference on Disarmament to implement General Assembly resolution 48/75 L.

One of the positive results of the profound transformation in the security agenda in recent years is the increasing significance attached to the notion of verification for international arms-control and disarmament agreements. It clearly indicates general recognition of the fact that properly functioning, effective mechanisms of international verification are essential to ensuring compliance with the obligations deriving from various treaties and to building confidence between States.

Hungary is in a special position to be highly appreciative of such a trend. For a number of years we have been witnessing the positive effects of an elaborate disarmament verification system — namely, that of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. Our experience has proved beyond a doubt that this kind of mechanism in itself may contribute positively to the security of the region involved. It is in this spirit that we welcome the prospects for the conclusion of a CTBT with an elaborated strict and non-discriminatory international verification system rather like the one already in force within the framework of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Also in accordance with this approach, Hungary actively participates in the efforts to strengthen the biological-weapons Convention by elaborating its verification mechanism. A good start has been made in the work of the Ad Hoc group that Hungary has the honour to chair. This Group has identified the crucial issues for further deliberation and has prepared the ground for substantive negotiations on the elements of a possible verification protocol. Hungary advocates that this work be speeded up. We hope that that would result in the submission of specific proposals for consideration and adoption at next year's Review Conference. Hungary shares the concerns about the enormous global problem posed by the irresponsible and indiscriminate use of anti-personnel land-mines, and calls for urgent international efforts to resolutely address this issue. We express our readiness to contribute to joint action on the part of the international community, be it within the framework of the United Nations or through other arrangements. At the international meeting on mine clearance, held in Geneva in July 1995, we outlined our proposals for our participation in the corresponding programme of the United Nations.

Another way of tackling the land-mine issue is to strengthen the major instrument of international humanitarian law in this respect. Hungary assumed its share of responsibility and participated actively in the first phase of the Review Conference of the 1980 Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. It was our expectation that it would achieve a major step forward, further restricting or prohibiting the use and transfer of those categories and types of anti-personnel land-mines that present the greatest danger to civilians. We cannot conceal our disappointment over the failure of the negotiations last week in Vienna. We also believe that the momentum and the achievements of the first part of the Conference should be preserved. At the same time, we welcome the adoption of a new protocol on blinding laser weapons, which again proves the determination of the international community to bring the obligations under the rules of war into line with the progress of military technology in past decades.

In his Supplement to "An Agenda for Peace", the Secretary-General drew attention to the need for so-called micro-disarmament, that is, the need to establish more effective ways to combat the illicit transfer and acquisition of small conventional weapons. Indeed, it has now become rather disturbing to realize the potential of such transfers to disrupt national, regional and even international peace and stability. Hence, Hungary believes that in addition to the recent encouraging development with regard to transparency measures in the field of conventional armaments, a further refinement of the functioning of the Register of Conventional Arms and an extension of its scope could serve as a new and useful means of building confidence and stability, both on a global scale and on a regional level. That is why, regarding this issue, we are looking forward with great interest to the new draft resolution that the representative of Spain, speaking on behalf of the European Union, alluded to just a while ago.

I fully agree with the view expressed by the representative of Spain that, in all probability, it is on the regional level that increased confidence and greater transparency in military matters have the most significant, positive effects, especially as far as conventional weaponry is concerned. That is why we attribute special importance to the results achieved within the framework of regional organizations.

Representing the Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), I am proud to refer here to the achievements of the OSCE summit meeting held in Budapest last December, such as the adoption of a "Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security", or the common determination of its member States to further develop those confidence-building measures that are already included in the Vienna document of 1994. Nevertheless, we are also convinced that even more concerted action and measures are needed at the regional and subregional levels, first and foremost in the context of conflict-ridden areas. Let us recall that the OSCE has already received a mandate to address specific regional security problems with special emphasis on longer-term stability in south-eastern Europe. In this context, we attribute vital importance to the early establishment of arrangements to reduce conventional armaments on the territory of the former Yugoslavia. We cannot foresee a lasting solution to the tragic war there unless we are able to introduce into the settlement process a treaty limiting the armed forces of the States that have emerged on the territory of the former Yugoslavia, including those of their neighbours and perhaps some other States as well.

Effective control of the massive arms stockpiles of that subregion would also serve as a prerequisite for the smooth implementation of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. This Treaty has been, and will remain, a basic pillar of European security and stability, even if it is in need of some adjustments, as discussed in the course of those weeks in Vienna.

Mr. Valencia-Rodriguez (Ecuador) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: In this general debate, my delegation wishes to state its position on various subjects, without prejudice to statements we may, if need be, make on specific points later. That position relates to the following issues.

One: Ecuador supported the indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), and in so doing supported the unity of action resulting therefrom, together with the Principles and Objectives on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, on disarmament and on an improved verification system. Accordingly, we emphasize, first, the obligation assumed by the nuclear Powers to conclude the comprehensive test-ban treaty not later than in 1996. Conclusion of that treaty continues to be one of the essential objectives of the international community; secondly, the initiation and prompt conclusion of negotiations towards a convention on the prohibition of the production of fissionable materials; and thirdly, worldwide efforts to reduce and ultimately eliminate nuclear weapons in order to achieve general and complete disarmament.

Two: Ecuador supports the moratorium imposed on tests by three nuclear Powers and applauds their decision. In its opinion, even though the measures on non-proliferation and control are indispensable, they should only be provisional action leading to the complete prohibition and destruction of all nuclear weapons.

Three: As stated in the Quito Declaration adopted by the Heads of State and Governments of the Rio Group, Ecuador reiterates its profound concern at, and condemnation of, the resumption of nuclear tests by the People's Republic of China, and the decision of the Government of France to resume testing in the Pacific. The fact that these tests took place immediately after the NPT Conference is particular condemnable, not only for that reason, but also because they endanger the environment. It has been proven that nuclear testing, even underground, produces radioactivity.

Four: As regards assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States of the non-use or threat of the use of such weapons, Ecuador recalls the obligations deriving from Security Council resolution 984 (1995), in which the Council

> "takes note .. of the statements made by each of the nuclear-weapons States (S/1995/261, S/1995/262, S/1995/263, S/1995/264, S/1995/265), in which they give security assurances against the use of nuclear weapons to non-nuclear States that are Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons".

Ecuador, endorsing the statement made by the Security Council in this resolution, appeals for the early negotiation of an international treaty calling for the non-use of such weapons in the above-mentioned cases.

Five: My delegation states that Latin America and the Caribbean is the first nuclear-weapon-free zone established by the sovereign and common will of all the countries of the region. We consider that the Treaty of Tlatelolco, as well as that of Rarotonga, must be taken as models for the conclusion of other regional commitments of the same nature.

Six: Ecuador attaches especial importance to control of conventional weapons at the regional and subregional levels. It considers that regional disarmament must be complemented by conventional disarmament measures and initiatives at the world level, keeping in mind that the major Powers account for more than 75 per cent of the world's conventional military force. It is also concerned about the uneven distribution of weapons among States in a given region. In the last analysis this lack of balance, far from promoting greater stability for those which possess them only increases the insecurity of the region as a whole. Small States, with less military means, are the ones which suffer most from these imbalances of military forces, owing to the fact that militarily well-equipped countries tend to resort to the use of their force rather than to settle their disputes peacefully. Ecuador considers that the imbalance in the levels of conventional weapons can be rectified only through regional disarmament.

Seven: It should be remembered that, even though conventional weapons have been responsible for the greatest number of victims since the Second World War, nuclear weapons have, none the less, been the main subject of international control efforts. We believe, therefore, that the adoption of control measures with regard to conventional weapons should not be overlooked. In 1993, the least developed countries spent $49 per capita and per country to purchase such weapons. One major Power monopolizes three quarters of the world's arms trafficking to the least developed region. In their recent Quito Declaration, the Presidents and Heads of State and Government of the Rio Group renewed their willingness to cooperate in promoting transparency in the international transfers of weapons and in defence budgets and expenditures. One of the suitable mechanisms for exercising this control is the Register of

Conventional Arms. Ecuador has submitted the required information for that Register.

Eight: Resolution 49/75 D established the eventual elimination of anti-personnel land-mines as an objective sought by the international community. Innocent and defenceless civilians have fallen victim, economic development has been impeded and other grave consequences have resulted from their use. In this sense, Ecuador applauds the moratorium declared by some States on the export of anti-personnel land-mines. We encourage new international efforts to find solutions to the problems caused by these weapons with a view to their total elimination. At the same time, it is absolutely necessary to take measures to prohibit the use of laser blinding weapons before they get onto the illicit trafficking markets of terrorists and drug dealers.

Nine: Ecuador also recalls that in the aforementioned Quito Declaration, the Heads of State or Government of the Rio Group urged those countries which have not yet done so to sign and ratify as soon as possible the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and of Their Destruction. They also stressed their decision to work together to prepare the Convention on biological weapons through the adoption of appropriate measures.

Ten: In view of what I have just said, we can reaffirm that the actions that could lead to general and complete disarmament are closely linked to the developing concept of security. We can no longer associate the concept of security exclusively with military and border issues. Terrorism, drug trafficking, ethnic and religious confrontations and ideological conflicts threaten the State from within its own borders. At the beginning of the century, 90 per cent of the victims of armed conflicts were soldiers; today, 90 per cent are civilians. The concept of security has taken on new dimensions to cover economic, social and cultural aspects. We must therefore re-define this concept in global terms.

Eleven: In relation to this concept of security there is the urgent need to apply — fully and with universal scope — the principle of the peaceful settlement of international disputes provided for in international law. In fact, if differences among States prevail and negotiations to settle disputes peacefully are not sought, the road to disarmament will be difficult.

Twelve: Regarding the expansion of the membership of the Conference on Disarmament in accordance with resolution 49/77 B, Ecuador considers that the 1993 report of the Special Coordinator, Ambassador Sullivan, is entirely obsolete and it would be strange, to say the least, to bring an old document to life which does not satisfy the aspirations of many countries, including Ecuador, which are interested in becoming members of that body.

Mr. Dimitrov (Bulgaria): Please allow me at the outset to congratulate you on your election to the Chair of this important Committee. The delegation of Bulgaria is confident that under your able and skilful guidance the work in the Committee will yield tangible results. Our words of appreciation go also to the other members of the Bureau, as well as to the Secretary of the Committee.

The delegation of Bulgaria associated itself with the statement made by the representative of Spain on behalf of the European Union and the associated States from Central and Eastern Europe, Cyprus and Malta. In the statement on behalf of my Government, I would like to put special emphasis on certain issues which are of particular interest to the Republic of Bulgaria.

The year 1995 brought us some positive results in the field of disarmament and international security, which paved the way to a better and more stable world. A historic achievement was the decision of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to make the Treaty of indefinite duration and also to strengthen the review process of the Treaty. Bulgaria believes that both nuclear and non-nuclear-weapon States will endeavour to achieve further progress in nuclear-arms control and disarmament.

Bulgaria is also of the view that confidence in the international non-proliferation regime, of which the NPT is the cornerstone, can exist only if States are completely transparent with regard to their nuclear activities. Accordingly, we have established a national system of nuclear-related export control which meets all international requirements.

Bulgaria takes part in the efforts of the international community to strengthen the control over sensitive items by implementing the respective guidelines of the Nuclear Suppliers Group and the Zangger Committee. We have on numerous occasions expressed our desire to join also the Australian Group and the Missile Technology Control Regime.

As an active member of the Conference on Disarmament, Bulgaria supports the completion of a

universal multilateral and internationally verifiable nuclear-test-ban treaty by 1996 at the latest. We believe that the comprehensive test-ban treaty should prohibit all nuclear explosions in all environments. Bulgaria has at its disposal considerable expertise and equipment which may be used in a future comprehensive test-ban treaty verification system.

Another important item on the nuclear-non-proliferation agenda is the prohibition of the production of fissionable materials for weapons purposes. By establishing an ad hoc committee on a cut-off convention, the Conference on Disarmament will create the necessary framework for the initiation of intensive multilateral negotiations on this issue. We see the future cut-off treaty as an important legally binding instrument contributing to the further strengthening of the non-proliferation regime.

I would like at this juncture to express also the firm belief of the Bulgarian delegation that States that have renounced the nuclear option in a legally binding form have the legitimate right to be assured against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. We welcome the adoption on 11 April this year by the Security Council of resolution 984 (1995) and the respective statements made by each of the nuclear-weapon States on security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States. We view this resolution as a new important step of progress on the issue and as an appropriate framework for negotiating a future legally binding international instrument on the provision of security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States.

Bulgaria has demonstrated its commitment to the prohibition of another type of weapon of mass destruction — the chemical type — by being among the original 65 States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction and by becoming the eleventh signatory State to deposit its instrument of ratification. This legal act has endorsed the position that Bulgaria does not possess or produce chemical weapons and that no such weapons are stored on its territory. It is our hope that States which have not yet ratified this important international instrument will act promptly to bring the Chemical Weapons Convention into force as soon as possible.

Bulgaria also strictly abides by the biological weapons Convention, and all its research and development programmes have always been transparent as part of its commitment to help enhance international confidence in this field. We are ready to participate constructively in drawing up appropriate verification provisions in the course of the work of the Ad Hoc Group of the States Parties to the Convention. It is the position of the Bulgarian delegation that, by including verification provisions in the Convention similar to those of the Chemical Weapons Convention, not only will we strengthen the regime established by the biological weapons Convention, but we will also make it more attractive to States that have not yet joined.

The disarmament and arms-control agenda is now increasingly focused on conventional weapons and related matters. Bulgaria has contributed to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms every year since its establishment. We see the strengthening of the Register as an appropriate step in setting up a working mechanism for ensuring transparency in the field of conventional armaments. Bulgaria favours the inclusion in the Register of data on military holdings and procurement through national production.

The Republic of Bulgaria is among the initiators of the regional disarmament process and the elaboration of comprehensive confidence- and security-building measures that have contributed immensely to European security and stability. At the same time, Bulgaria is of the view that the quantities of conventional weapons that remain in Europe exceed the needs of security and stability, especially in some regions. The interest in further specific confidence-building and arms-control measures in the Balkans is particularly well founded in the present circumstances.

Bulgaria has signed bilateral agreements with Greece and Turkey on confidence- and security-building measures — complementary to the 1994 Vienna Document of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) — that provide for lower thresholds for notification and observation. It is expected that a similar agreement will be signed soon with Romania. Such bilateral measures lead to greater transparency in military activities, have a stabilizing effect, especially in border areas, and stimulate contacts between the militaries of the respective States. The next step, in our opinion, should be the promotion of multilateral cooperation with a view to achieving comprehensive security and confidence in south-central Europe.

Needless to say, it would be impossible to achieve this task under the conditions of an ongoing conflict. We are therefore encouraged by recent developments which pave the way to a peaceful, lasting and balanced settlement to the conflict on the territory of the former Yugoslavia. Besides this, and even before such settlement is achieved, there is already an urgent need at this stage to start laying the

foundations for lasting stability, security and cooperation in the south-central European region as an integral part of a united Europe of democratic values and institutions. This effort should result in the elaboration of a common forward-looking comprehensive stability- and security-enhancing approach, as well as practical steps for its implementation.

In order to bring this into reality, Bulgaria is of the view that the following practical steps should be implemented. First, the basic standards of good-neighbourly relations and internationally recognized borders should be reaffirmed, as should all OSCE principles and norms in the regional context. Secondly, trans border cooperation, including the modernization and upgrading of checkpoints and border-crossing and customs procedures, should be developed, to facilitate the free movement of commodities, services, capital and people, and to promote cooperation at the local level. Thirdly, ways and means should be elaborated for overcoming the stagnation of, and injecting economic dynamism into, the region through infrastructure development and properly structured foreign investment and financial and technical assistance. Fourthly, transport, telecommunications and energy infrastructures in the region should be developed, upgraded and interconnected with the trans-European networks as a major instrument for fostering sustained economic growth. Fifthly, the legal basis for trade and commerce should be further improved and bilateral trade flows should be rapidly expanded through trade promotion facilities and mechanisms. Lastly, long-term cooperation should be promoted for social and economic rehabilitation with a view to building democratic institutions and civil societies in an environment of political stability and economic growth.

In the field of arms control, Bulgaria shares the view that the establishment of a future harmonized arms-control regime should combine measures of an all-European and of a regional character, reflecting in every concrete situation the concept of indivisible security. This position is based on the understanding that any disproportional concentration of armaments, especially when combined with a lack of control mechanisms, could have a negative impact on security and stability. Therefore, the establishment of a credible system of arms-control and security- and confidence-building measures for the territory of the former Yugoslavia should be an essential part of the comprehensive post-war settlement. Such relevant international bodies as the United Nations and the OSCE should play a very important role in this respect.

The Government of the Republic of Bulgaria is ready to contribute actively to the implementation of these goals.

Mr. Pérez-Otermin (Uruguay) (*interpretation from Spanish*): For the past 50 years, the First Committee has been the most important multilateral forum in areas related to international peace and security, a forum to which each and every one of the members of the international community — be they rich or poor, weak or strong — contributes with the overwhelming sense of being equal under the Charter.

Uruguay is a country of peace. The peaceful settlement of international disputes is a guiding principle of its foreign policy. Its tireless commitment to peace is a banner which it will never lay down.

While tensions that have arisen in historic moments, happily behind us, have given us a world more free and open to achieving the ultimate objectives of the Charter — to practice tolerance and peaceful coexistence, maintain international peace and security and save succeeding generations from the scourge of war — today's peace is still a peace of little wars, local and regional conflicts fanned by drastic differences of an ethnic, economic or religious nature.

In the framework of these conflicts, the work of the principal organs of the General Assembly, especially the First Committee, become especially important. Depending on the degree of the commitment entered into by Member States at the request of the Assembly, especially during this the fiftieth anniversary year, rhetoric has often run counter to the statements made at major conferences. These should translate into effective measures, but in the final analysis it is frequently forgotten that the most important components of the international system are the peoples of the United Nations.

It appears that nuclear non-proliferation is among the most important topics before the First Committee during the current session. Practically all States represented here participated in the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the outcome of which is important. The principal result is the indefinite extension of the Treaty — reaffirmation of the clauses that propose the final elimination of nuclear weapons and of any use of nuclear power for the purposes of war. Furthermore, in decision 2, on the "Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament", the Conference urged

strict compliance with what is said in the framework of the Treaty.

Among the principles that stand out are the need for States to cooperate to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and the need for States to comply with the obligations entered into concerning complete nuclear disarmament, as well as commitments relating to the current problem of nuclear tests.

It is not without some disappointment that we have seen how many of the words used in the text of the decision and in the consensus of the participating States have been rendered meaningless by the force of the underground nuclear explosions carried out by States that have continued nuclear testing, contrary to their commitments and against history itself. While we do understand the policies of the nuclear-weapon States that have maintained a moratorium on such tests, we must categorically reject those that imperil the negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty, which must be negotiated in good faith within the Conference on Disarmament, in Geneva.

Uruguay supports the efforts of States represented in the First Committee to produce a text reflecting the international community's concern about nuclear tests. With regard to nuclear-weapon-free zones, we should like to reiterate the support of Uruguay — a party to the Treaty of Tlatelolco — for initiatives of this kind. Evidence of this is our country's participation in the historic meeting of the States parties to the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the Treaty of Rarotonga, which was held at the United Nations on 21 September last. In addition, Uruguay reaffirms its cooperation with neighbouring countries of the South Atlantic through close contacts in the framework of the Zone of Peace and Cooperation of the South Atlantic, which was declared by the General Assembly in October 1986.

I should like now to refer to other specific items which deserve the Committee's attention and which my delegation wishes to highlight.

First, we are concerned at the noticeable lack of consensus in the work of the Conference on Disarmament. In fact, one cannot but be alarmed at the fact that two of the working groups within the Committee, which were charged by the General Assembly with the duty of submitting documents agreed at the last session, have been unable to reach agreement on the content of those documents. We cannot understand how, just a short time after agreement on various aspects of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, it was not possible to reach consensus on the "process of nuclear disarmament, in the framework of international peace and security, with the objective of the elimination of nuclear weapons".

Another matter of particular interest to Uruguay is that of anti-personnel land-mines. The delegation of Uruguay will support initiatives to secure approval for a total moratorium on the production of such weapons.

We should also applaud the efforts made by many delegations in the meeting of the States parties to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects — an exercise intended to reinforce the provisions of the Convention.

Specific matters before the General Assembly can often be clouded with abstractions by those who do not believe that these principles are capable of being translated into the harsh reality of international relations. For example, when we refer to agenda item 70 (General and complete disarmament) we forget such matters as illicit trafficking in weapons or the destabilization of small States — a topic so crudely persistent for the international community, as illustrated by the case of the new aggression of mercenaries in Comoros. These dreadful events can occur in a world that is not so free of international tensions because States forget that behind each intellectual abstraction, each full stop and comma in General Assembly resolutions, there is a problem both complicated and simple — as complex as the achievement of lasting peace in a world constantly at war; as simple as the straightforward implementation of the principles set out in the Charter and referred to at the beginning of these remarks.

I should like to take this opportunity to convey to you, Sir, my delegation's congratulations on your election to the chairmanship of the Committee. We have no doubt that your experience in this field, your well-known impartiality and your objectivity will inspire this body to real achievement. Our congratulations go to the other officers of the Committee too.

Mr. Mohammed Zihin (Malaysia): Allow me, on behalf of my delegation, to extend to you, Sir, congratulations and best wishes on your election as Chairman of the Committee. Our congratulations and best wishes go also to the other officers of the Committee. My

delegation is confident that your able leadership and your wisdom will ensure success in our important work.

The Malaysian delegation maintains that this Committee has an important role and task in discharging the Charter obligation

"To maintain international peace and security",

including the principles governing disarmament and the regulation of armaments. We hope that the fact that this is the last of the Main Committees to begin work will not be construed as reflecting diminished importance.

On 29 September, in his statement during the general debate of the fiftieth session of the United Nations General Assembly, the Malaysian Prime Minister, commenting on the state of the world, made the following remarks, among others:

> "The victors of 1945 have clung tenaciously to the levers of power. They control the high ground, exercising influence and power as nakedly as when they were colonial Powers. Only the masks have changed. ... Less than six months ago, we witnessed the use of the United Nations to push through, draconian-like, the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty. Before the ink was dry, some of the nuclear Powers proceeded to test their diabolical weapons. What, may I ask, qualifies some countries to possess the means of mass destruction in perpetuity? It is time that the nuclear-weapon States committed themselves to nuclear disarmament through a programmed reduction of their nuclear arsenals within a specific time-frame, beginning with the immediate cessation of all nuclear tests and culminating in their total elimination.
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> ...
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> "Perversely, the major Powers not only continue to compete in developing ever more destructive ... weapons but also compete to sell arms. And when some developing countries buy arms the Western-controlled media accuse them of indulging in arms races."

As we approach the 22nd of October, the opening of the Special Commemorative Meeting on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, there are still some Member States which have not heeded the call of the United Nations, namely "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind".

The 1995 Review and Extension Conference of States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which was held in April-May this year in New York, was the centre-piece of the nuclear disarmament issue. Malaysia had hoped that an extension for a fixed period or a series of fixed periods would ensure the nuclear Powers to make commitments and advances in areas that would ensure the elimination of nuclear weapons. These areas include the comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty, security assurances from the nuclear-weapon States, the ban on the production of fissile material for weapons purposes, respect for existing and future nuclear-weapon-free zones, and allowing full access to non-nuclear-weapon States Parties to the Treaty to nuclear material and technology for peaceful purposes.

At the time of the Review and Extension Conference we had anticipated that the provision of *carte blanche* for indefinite extension of the Treaty would provide the nuclear Powers with a free hand: our fears were indeed confirmed as nuclear testing is continuing despite international outcries and protests.

Malaysia remains committed to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), to which we attach vital importance as a means to check nuclear proliferation in all its forms. The outcome of the Review and Extension Conference of States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons requires that the comprehensive test-ban treaty be concluded no later than 1996. The Conference on Disarmament, through its Ad Hoc Committee on A Nuclear Test Ban should continue to expedite the conclusion of that treaty. In the meantime, we would like to applaud those nuclear-weapon States that announced self-imposed moratoriums on nuclear weapon testing and the others for continuing to show restraint. We call on the nuclear-weapon States not to hinder the progress of the current work of the Conference on Disarmament to negotiate the comprehensive test-ban treaty.

The most recent announcement by some nuclear Powers regarding "true zero yield" is indeed encouraging. If this principle is accepted, it would ban any nuclear-weapon-test explosion or any other nuclear explosion, no matter how small. A nuclear test ban should be total and complete, without exception — not even for explosions to check the safety and reliability of nuclear arsenals.

The issue of nuclear disarmament is an issue of utmost importance to Malaysia. We have already submitted our written statements to the International Court of Justice in response to both the resolutions of the World Health Organization and the United Nations General Assembly, seeking an advisory opinion on whether the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is legal. Our position is clear. We support the argument that any use of nuclear weapons is illegal under international law. Nuclear weapons should be outlawed by the international community.

Regarding the other weapons of mass destruction, we support the comprehensive ban on chemical weapons, and Malaysia was among the early signatories of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction when it was opened for signature in Paris in January 1993. Malaysia hopes that the achievement of a comprehensive ban on chemical weapons will help promote international confidence and further contribute to world peace and security. We are taking steps to implement the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention with a view to ratifying the Convention.

The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, to which Malaysia is a party, faces the problem of the lack of effective verification measures. It is our hope that the Ad Hoc Group of States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention will come up with proposals for strengthening the Convention, with a view to their inclusion in a legally binding instrument.

While emphasis on the disarmament of weapons of mass destruction have taken centre stage, the question of the regulation and reduction of conventional armaments also deserves serious attention. Transparency at the level of armaments of member countries will contribute to confidence-building, reduce conflict situations and lessen tension in the world. Malaysia supports the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and recently submitted its data on arms transfer for the year 1994. It is our hope that the Register could be expanded to include more data in the list.

My delegation regrets that the recently concluded Review Conference of States Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons held in Vienna was not able to come up with a stronger outcome regarding restrictions on the manufacture and use of land-mines. It is difficult to comprehend that while land-mines kill or maim approximately 20,000 people a year, it was not possible to achieve the consensus required regarding their restriction. It is frightening to note that approximately 110 million land-mines are buried in 64 countries and that commerce in these mines continues unabatedly. As the international community endeavours to assist in the rehabilitation of the victims, we must practice the principle that "he who profits from the tools of war must contribute to the maintenance of peace ...".

The recent decision of the Conference on Disarmament to expand its membership is most welcome. However, we do not see the logic in limited expansion, since it risks the effectiveness of this body as a representative negotiating forum. Some countries which have championed the participation of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the social and economic work of the international system have resisted the inclusion of NGOs in the work of the Conference on Disarmament. We maintain that NGOs also can make valuable contributions in the discussions in the Conference on Disarmament. International security is not the concern of a privileged few, but rather the common responsibility of the international community.

The Chairman: The Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, Mr. Ian Kenyon, has formally requested to make a statement. With the concurrence of the Committee, I invite Mr. Kenyon to make a statement.

Mr. Kenyon (Preparatory Commission for the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)): Allow me first to thank you, Mr. Chairman, and the members of the First Committee for once again permitting me to address the Committee on the work of the Preparatory Commission for the OPCW.

Almost three years ago, General Assembly resolution 47/39, which commended the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, and called upon all States to sign and ratify it, was adopted by consensus by the General Assembly. Today the number of States signatories to the Convention has reached 159 and 40 of them have already deposited their instruments of ratification with the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The preparatory phase for the implementation of the Convention, finalized after nearly two decades of arduous negotiations, is nearing completion. The

international community now awaits the entry into force of this landmark multilateral agreement.

The fact that 159 States have signed the Convention in the relatively short period of time since it was opened for signature in January 1993 reflects the broad international support it enjoys. The negotiators at Geneva determined that a relatively high figure of 65 ratifications should be necessary before the Convention could enter into force in order to ensure that this Convention, with its comprehensive verification regime, could be implemented in an effective manner. The fact that Governments and parliaments of 40 States in all parts of the globe have already agreed to deposit their instruments of ratification signifies their faith in the Convention as an instrument which will enhance regional and global security. It also reflects their conviction that the obligations to be undertaken by adhering to the Convention are a relatively small price to pay for the complete elimination of existing stockpiles of chemical weapons and related production facilities within a specific time-frame under international supervision.

The incidents of chemical terrorism in Japan this spring and summer have served to highlight the fact that the proliferation of chemical weapons is a serious threat even beyond the level of the State itself. While the Convention was not specifically designed to combat terrorism, there is a growing realization that the Convention will provide a forum for promoting international cooperation and responsibility, a system for resolution of national concerns and means for coordinating appropriate responses to the threat of terrorist attacks with chemical weapons, including the provision of protective equipment. Domestic laws related to implementing the Convention in each State party will ensure that developing and producing chemical-warfare agents will become a criminal offence, and precursor chemicals and raw materials related to the manufacture of chemical weapons will be tracked and controlled in an efficient manner.

However, despite the fact that the Convention has already been ratified by 40 Member States, there is a growing concern that the two largest, and the only declared possessors of chemical weapons, the United States and the Russian Federation, have yet to do so. The absence from the list of ratifiers of these two countries, which are looked upon as leaders by a number of other countries, would seriously affect the meaningful implementation and entry into force of the Convention. In addition to the 40 countries which have already ratified the Convention, many more have already completed their procedures for ratification. A number of countries, however, are waiting for the United States and the Russian Federation to take a lead. Planning for the verification activities of the OPCW and implementation of the Convention rest on the twin assumptions that the United States and Russia will be among the initial ratifiers of the Chemical Weapons Convention, and that the June 1990 Agreement between the United States and the Russian Federation on Destruction and Non-Production of Chemical Weapons will be in force before the Convention enters into force.

Accordingly, in accordance with a decision taken at the last session of the Commission in July, a troika, consisting of the present Chairman of the Commission, Ambassador Zacharias de Beer of South Africa, the previous Chairman, Ambassador Finn Fostervoll of Norway, and myself visited Washington during the month of September and Moscow over the past week to promote renewed political attention to, and early ratification of, the Convention. Despite the fact that political support for the Convention has never been in doubt, other priorities and extraneous factors are clouding the early ratification of the Convention in these two countries. As the United States Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, stated on 25 September while addressing the United Nations General Assembly:

> "we should push for the earliest possible entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention. President Clinton has urged the United States Senate to act promptly on its ratification, and to stop holding the START II Treaty and the Chemical Weapons Convention hostage to unrelated issues. ... The Chemical Weapons Convention will make every nation safer, and we need it now." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Fiftieth Session, Plenary Meetings, 4th meeting, p. 12)*

The impending elections to the legislature and the presidency in both these countries make it all the more desirable that the Convention be ratified as early as possible.

In The Hague the Preparatory Commission has continued its tasks of developing operational requirements and procedures for the conduct of inspections and related activities, and building the infrastructure for the future Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. These activities have proceeded in parallel with commendable progress towards preparation for effectively implementing the Convention in member States. Eleven sessions of the Commission have now been held, producing

important decisions for the implementation of the Convention. Without going into details, I should like to highlight some achievements in the following areas. Following the development of a three-module general training scheme for inspector candidates, national training offers have been evaluated and most of the courses have been certified. The selection process for inspector-trainee candidates has been undertaken in earnest this year. The final list for training of the first group of 160 candidates for the inspectorate can be completed soon. Over all, the standard of candidates has been impressive. Besides the United States and the Russian Federation, training will take place in China, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, India, Japan, the Netherlands, Romania, Slovakia, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

The decision was taken earlier this year to establish the OPCW laboratory and equipment store in Rijswijk. The approved list of inspection equipment consisting of 94 separate items has been drawn up and most of the specifications have been approved. Requests for tender for 43 items amounting to approximately 4.5 million Netherlands guilders have been sent to interested companies in member States. Procurement of the remaining 45 items and laboratory equipment will commence shortly. The entire procurement process in this phase is expected to be completed by the end of this year or early next year.

Work has progressed on the development of declaration forms for incorporation in the draft declarations handbook and on inspection report formats for the chemical industry. A draft model agreement for Schedule 2 facilities, which could serve as a model for other facility agreements, is in an advanced stage of development. Work on elaborating guidelines and procedures for inspections in chemical industry facilities has been largely completed. The Commission has adopted the drafts for the OPCW Policy on Confidentiality, the OPCW Media and Public Affairs Policy, and the OPCW Health and Safety Policy. Decisions have been taken to apply these policies *mutatis mutandis* to work of the Commission. Visa-related practices in member States for the smooth entry of inspectors are under active consideration. A data bank on chemical protection is being established. The provisions for a voluntary fund for assistance under the Convention have been finalized. In order to facilitate the work of national authorities and others interested in information on the Convention, the secretariat has now established a site on the Internet.

Progress on setting up the infrastructure of OPCW has been fairly smooth. The Commission has once again recommended a two-phased total budget of about $30 million for 1996. Approximately $14 million will be utilized for continuing the work of the Commission pending the sixty-fifth ratification, with the secretariat remaining at roughly its current authorized strength of 125 staff. At present 114 staff members from 44 nationalities are working in the secretariat.

An additional amount of approximately $16 million will become available upon the deposit of the sixty-fifth instrument of ratification to take care of activities planned in the six months immediately prior to the entry into force of the Convention. The staff strength upon the entry into force of the Convention will be 369, including 140 inspectors, and preliminary estimates suggest that the staff strength of the OPCW will reach around 450, including 211 inspectors, about six months after the entry into force of the Convention. The detailed budget for the OPCW will be considered shortly, but expectations are that the amount will be of the order of $100 million for the first 12 months — a figure much lower than earlier projections.

Earlier this year agreement was reached on the site and design of a new, tailor-made building for the OPCW and the related infrastructure. Attention is also focused currently on developing a personnel policy for the OPCW in order to attract highly qualified experts; on setting up an information management system which will effectively support the verification mechanism while taking care of confidentiality concerns; and on finalizing the draft for a headquarters agreement with the host State — the Netherlands.

Some issues still need to be resolved in the near future. These include the remaining issues related to declarations in the chemical industry and chemical-weapons production facilities; detailed procedures related to the verification of old and abandoned chemical weapons; the timing of harmonizing export controls in the light of the provisions of the Convention on economic and technological development; and preparing for the transition between the Commission and the OPCW.

The Commission adopted a new format of work at its last session in July. Under this system, formal meetings of the expert groups which prepare decisions for the working groups and formal sessions of the Commission are convened only if there is a reasonable expectation that they will be able to record progress. Substantive work is now proceeding on the basis of clusters of consultations undertaken by expert-group chairmen.

Member States themselves are actively addressing such matters as the planning and development of data-handling systems; setting up the apparatus for ensuring the confidentiality of declarations; the finalization of facility agreements; and the procedures for the conduct of inspections of industrial facilities. A number of member States have already passed national implementing legislation, set up their national authorities and started training escorts in receiving and guiding inspectors, reviewing and streamlining visa regulations and sensitizing immigration and customs officials for implementing the Convention in an effective manner.

A number of non-governmental organizations and research institutes have maintained their valuable support for the Secretariat in the process of national implementation in member States. The secretariat has circulated a model for implementing legislation and has continued such activities as organizing seminars in various regions of the world, making direct contacts with the industry worldwide and organizing meetings with industry representatives in The Hague at regular intervals. In 1995, regional seminars on national implementation of the Convention have been organized in Minsk, Lima, Havana, Yamoussoukro, Yaoundé and Seoul. Next month will see one in Addis Ababa. A course for personnel of national authorities, in which 49 participants and 40 member States took part, was organized last month in the Netherlands.

The Convention must be brought into legal force as soon as possible for the world to reap its benefits. A significant delay will encourage continued proliferation and provide an increasing temptation to develop new kinds of weapons and would affect the political momentum for the banning of such weapons.

The opportunity for eliminating an entire class of weapons of mass destruction for ever should not be frittered away. The international community is faced with a crowded arms-control agenda now and in the near future, and the Chemical Weapons Convention has been hailed as a test-case for other multilateral disarmament endeavours. I hope that this Committee will continue its support for ensuring the early entry into force of the Convention.

The Chairman: We have heard the last speaker for this morning's meeting.

One representative has requested to speak in exercise of the right of reply. Accordingly, since this is the first time that this right is being exercised, I now call on the Secretary of the Committee to read out the relevant guidelines concerning this procedure.

Mr. Kheradi (Secretary of the Committee): The ground rules pertaining to the right of reply are as follows:

> "Delegations should exercise their right of reply at the end of the day whenever two meetings have been scheduled for that day and whenever such meetings are devoted to the consideration of the same item.
>
> "The number of interventions in the exercise of the right of reply for any delegation at a given meeting should be limited to two per item.
>
> "The first intervention in the exercise of the right of reply for any delegation on any item at a given meeting should be limited to 10 minutes and the second intervention should be limited to five minutes." (*decision 34/401, paras. 8-10*)

Since no meeting of the First Committee is scheduled for this afternoon, in accordance with the relevant rule the right of reply can be exercised at this morning's meeting.

The Chairman: I now call on the representative of France, who wishes to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

Mrs. Bourgois (France) (*interpretation from French*): Allow me first to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the First Committee, which I am sure will work effectively under your guidance.

Some delegations have referred to the question of nuclear testing. Their statements prompt the French delegation to recall the facts and to place the most recent series of tests carried out by France in the context of the comprehensive and complete end of nuclear testing.

The series under way must be considered for what it is: a culmination. Our objective is to sign, in the autumn of 1996, a treaty banning all nuclear tests and other nuclear detonations. This is the major issue of the scope of such a treaty. Representatives are aware that, on 10 August 1995, at the Conference on Disarmament, France announced its endorsement of that objective and that wording. This is known as the "zero option".

In order to achieve that aim, however, and successfully to conclude those negotiations, my country has been obliged, within the brief span of time allotted before the end of May 1996, to assure the reliability and security

of its weapons for the future and to acquire mastery independent of simulation techniques. This campaign to complete our testing will allow France to support the strictest and most satisfactory option for the test-ban treaty.

Some observations made during this debate have been unfounded. In fact, this campaign does not damage the environment. Quite recently, eminent international experts have demonstrated the harmlessness of these tests. This campaign is in keeping with the rights and commitments undertaken by France. Utmost restraint does not mean prohibition or even suspension and we have never excluded the completion of this series of tests.

In conclusion, I note that the hypothesis of an immediate cessation of tests was referred to. I must point out that the notion of an immediate cessation — and I stress "immediate" — does not apply to France in so far as the forthcoming completion of the campaign under way is precisely the stage required for a final and complete cessation of the tests, which is our common goal.

The Chairman: I should like to remind representatives that, in accordance with the Committee's decision and as reflected in its programme of work and timetable, the list of speakers for the general debate on all disarmament and international security agenda items will be closed today at 6 p.m. I hope that delegations wishing to inscribe their names on the list of speakers will do so as soon as possible.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.